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A photograph of a large, red wooden barn with a gambrel roof, partially covered in snow. The barn has several small windows and a white door. The surrounding landscape is covered in a thick layer of snow, with some bare trees visible in the background. The sky is overcast and grey.

The View from 116 State Street

As we begin 2020, it is time to reflect on the year of ups and downs for Vermont Agriculture.

Low prices again were front and center at the start of 2019 but by the end the price of milk paid to farmers started to inch up. The federal price needs to get higher and stay there. The weather was a huge factor on Vermont's farms. The snow came again in early November and never left until May in many regions of Vermont. This was the second consecutive year farmers faced this snow challenge before fall chores were finished. Change is happening in the rural landscape under these challenging weather and economic conditions.

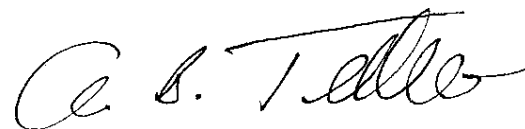
Over the past year, we saw dairy farmers diversifying their operations. We are seeing an increase in dairy farms shipping directly to processors with grass-based feeding operations and an increase of grass-based farming systems to receive a higher premium from their cooperative. There are currently 164 active dairy processors in Vermont, exceeding New York State's 109 dairy processors. We believe during 2020 Vermont will achieve a new record for dairy processors and hit the 170 processors mark. These start-ups are growing Vermont's economy. As an example, in Hardwick, a large goat dairy operation has been built with the farm owners moving their family from California to Vermont. The goal for this goat dairy is to reach a herd size of 4,000 goats and be able to supply goat milk to a newly built processing facility on the farm. The goat milk will go to cheese production and fluid goat milk dairy products.

In the Northeast Kingdom a family dairy farm is looking to expand and

diversify their operations. The five generations that make up the dairy farm, sugaring operation, and soon to be cheddar cheese processor are excited about their new approach. Cheeses will incorporate aspects of the beauty of the Northeast Kingdom, maple sugar, and the farms commitment to the care of their animals and the land that sustains them.

We also are seeing people move to Vermont because it's a great place to start a dairy business. A father daughter team has moved from Massachusetts to Vermont to start a goat farm and cheese processing business. The family selected Vermont due to the Vermont brand name for cheese makers and technical support they could receive when working with the Dairy Section of the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets. The farm had a successful first summer and looks to keep growing their operation.

These examples show what is happening in our small state. It's a state with a big heart, dreams, and work ethic. We will continue to offer our support to all those working in agriculture. We want to provide information and assistance so farmers can make the best decisions for their farms and families. We are wishing all those living and working off the land a healthy and prosperous 2020.



Anson Tebbetts, Secretary, Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets

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This Month's Recipe

Chocolate Butter Sweets

Recipe given to Anson Tebbetts by his Great Aunt Marion Shattuck

Ingredients:

½ cup butter
½ confectioner's sugar
¼ salt
1 tsp. vanilla
1 to 1 ¼ cup flour

Creamy Nut Filling

1 (3 oz) pkg cream cheese
1 cup confectioner's sugar
2 tb flour
1 tsp. vanilla
½ cup chopped walnut and coconut

Chocolate Frosting

½ cup chocolate chips
2 tb butter
2 tb water
½ confectioner's sugar

Cream butter. Add sugar, salt and vanilla. Cream well. Gradually add flour. Shape by teaspoonfuls into balls. Place on ungreased cookie sheets. Press holes in center of each.

Bake at 375° for 12-15 minutes delicately brown. Fill while warm. Cool and frost.

Filling: Soften pkg of cream cheese. Blend in confectioner's sugar, flour and vanilla. Cream well. *Optional:* stir in nuts and coconut.

Frosting: Melt chocolate bits and butter with water over low heat stirring occasionally. Add confectioners' sugar. Beat until smooth.

Farm Show

continued from page 1

how to work with the media and how to utilize social media for your business goals.

- **Weights & Measures** – Have your scale tested for the upcoming farmers market season!

These discussions, and scale testing, will be held during Farm Show hours in the second-floor conference room of the Expo facility. Look for the finalized schedule on the Agency's website and social media platforms, and in the Vermont Farm Show schedule.

Hours on Tuesday will continue to be 9:00 am to 5:00 pm and Thursday will be 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. Hope to see you there!

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Festive Fresh-Cut Christmas Trees Spread Holiday Spirit

By Scott Waterman, VT
Agency of Agriculture, Food &
Markets

Vermont Governor Phil Scott and Agriculture Secretary Anson Tebbetts visited the Werner Tree Farm in Middlebury the day after Thanksgiving to celebrate the beginning of the Christmas season with the help of Vermont's farmers. "As we enter the holiday season, Vermont and its people, including our farmers, offer so many reasons to celebrate," said Governor Phil Scott. "This is a time of year to take note of the good and unite around the true meaning

behind each of the seasons' traditions: Togetherness, community and hope."

According to the 2017 USDA Census, there are 3,650 acres in Christmas tree production in Vermont across 70 farms. The U.S. Department of Agriculture says the value of the Christmas tree industry in Vermont is more than \$2.6 million.

"Getting a fresh local tree brings us joy and happiness this time of year while also helping our Christmas tree growers by keeping the Green Mountains in agriculture," said Secretary Tebbetts. "The toughest part is the endless choices we have at Vermont's 'cut and

choose' operations in every corner of the state."

The Werner Tree Farm began farming Christmas trees near Middlebury in 1986. Multiple generations of the Werner family welcome the public to cut or pick their own tree, as do other cut-your-own tree farms across Vermont. For a full listing of Christmas Tree Growers open to the public visit the Vermont and New Hampshire Christmas Tree Association. www.nh-vtchristmastree.org.

From left to right, Amanda Werner, Governor Scott and Cheryl Werner at the Werner Tree Farm in Middlebury.



Daylong Workshops on Farm Succession and Transfer to Be Held in February

By Mike Ghia, VT Farm
Viability Program

What is the future of your farm? If you are like most farmers, you are so busy with the day-to-day business of farming you find it difficult to take the time to plan ahead; particularly planning for a transition from one generation to the next. It can be especially challenging during times of financial uncertainty. The long-term concerns of farm succession and transfer may seem far away and not of immediate concern. And it can be difficult if there is not

someone immediately lined up to take over the farm. At the same time, you probably have hopes for the future of your farm and have thought some about what you would like to happen to you, your family, your business and your land. To make those hopes more likely to become reality means taking some time to focus on planning for the inevitable transitions that come with life. With sound succession and transfer planning and concrete action steps, it is more likely that the goals and desires of all the generations involved can be met, and there is a greater

likelihood that the farm will stay in farming.

"The Farm Succession Seminar" is a daylong workshop for farmers to learn about key issues, tools and resources to help them make informed decisions and take action steps towards transferring their farm to the next generation of their family or a non-family successor. Farmers will learn from professionals who can help in the process and from other farmers who are working through the transfer process. Topics include management transfer, retirement and estate planning, addressing tax issues in a transfer, legal

entities and tools you can use to transfer farm assets, and determining your goals for retirement, business transitions, and your land. All generations, including family and non-family members, who may play a role in your farm's future are encouraged to attend.

This event is a part of the Management Development Seminar Series being offered by Yankee Farm Credit. Participants may choose to participate only in the Succession Seminar and also do not need to be members or customers of Yankee Farm Credit to participate. The Succession Seminar is

being offered in partnership with Land For Good, UNH Extension, UVM Extension, Vermont Housing & Conservation Board and is funded in part by the VHCB and the USDA Beginning Farm & Rancher Development Program.

The Farm Succession Seminar will be held Tuesday, February 4 in Woodstock, VT and again in Williston on Wednesday, February 5. For more info and to register, visit Management Development Seminar Series at <https://www.yankee farm credit.com/resource-center/management-development-seminar> or call 800-639-3053.

UVM's First Ever Soil Judging Team Wraps Up 2019 Season

By Ben Waterman, UVM Extension (and UVM Soil Judging team head coach)

Who needs basketball or track and field when you can compete in collegiate Soil Judging? In October of 2019, UVM established its first ever Soil Judging team, and sent seven students to the Northeast Regional Soil Judging competition in Maryland. Soil judging is the team "sport" of describing soils as accurately as possible, to eventually make interpretations for land uses such as agriculture, forestry or engineering. After jumping down into 5-foot deep pits and observing soil horizons and properties, students complete detailed soil descriptions using USDA methodology. The closest description to the professional soil scientists' description wins.

The sporty nature of Soil Judging ups the fun factor, but the program is primarily designed to provide students with hands-on experience to prepare them for career paths. Most jobs in any natural resource management field involve some form of technical soils or field assessment experience. Soil Judging equips students with a real, critical skill, the ability to accurately and professionally describe soils, which is in high demand among many employers in both private and public sectors. Agriview readers can likely attest

Soil Judging equips students with a real, critical skill, the ability to accurately and professionally describe soils, which is in high demand among many employers.

to the fact that countless agricultural and other land use decisions depend directly on soil!

The UVM Plant and Soil Science department offers various soil science courses, but Soil Judging, offered as a 1-credit course, is the first of its kind to get students interacting with a broader national community of soils students and professional soil scientists. Lucy Zendzian, a senior UVM Plant and Soil Science student commented, "Since my first soils class at UVM, I have been hooked on soil science, so I was excited UVM was developing a team. We'll all be able to get even more hands-on experience than our classes provide. It's also just a great excuse to get outside and dirty with a bunch of cool people!"

UVM trained in Northern Vermont in preparation for the Northeast regional event. The students practiced in the Champlain

Valley, known for its order of soils known as Alfisols, or soils characterized by high clay "argillic horizons," layers of soil where clay has accumulated. Out of all soils in Vermont, Champlain Valley soils resemble most what the students encountered in Maryland, where soils are much older and much more weathered, making clay accumulation common. These soils really tested students' ability to determine soil texture-by-feel! This is an exercise of discerning exact sand:silt:clay ratios using only one's hands to test a soil sample in the field. All five senses are used in Soil Judging, although tasting is optional (old timers and diehards actually swear they can gauge soil pH by taste!).

The competition in Maryland turned out to be fierce. UVM's first ever team went up against much bigger ag. programs and veteran soil judging teams. While they didn't take home the trophy, they gave it their all. Over the course of the entire program, students had logged over 20 full soil profiles! Soil Judgers included Jack Walinski, Alanna McLaughlin, Kinsey Ashe, Matthew Gorstein, Lucy Zendzian, Sydney Stegman, Meryl Braconnier, Sandra Walser and Jenny Bower and all displayed marked improvement. Best (and first) Soil Judging team UVM – and maybe even the rest of Vermont – has ever had.



Images from the soil judging competition held October in Maryland.

Adding Grass Fed Beef to the Family Farm

Meet Jake Boudreau and His Lowline Angus

By Jenn Colby, UVM Extension, Pasture Program

In the winter of 2018, Jake Boudreau planned for graduation and the next steps in life. As a University of Vermont senior, Jake was developing a business plan for his Northeast Kingdom family farm operation, which similar to many Vermont farms, has historically focused their operation around dairy and crop production. As an ambitious young farmer, Jake has new ideas for the future of their farm.

In addition to collecting guidance about loans, animal health, forages, and business planning, Jake also requested assistance in preparing a grazing plan for his growing herd of Lowline Angus in Danville, Vermont. Lowline Angus are a smaller-bodied beef breed, with a lighter impact on the land, a high carcass yield, and a friendly temperament. Throughout college, Jake had been acquiring cows with any spare money he had available to invest. Jake explains, "As I look ahead at what I like to do, and what's good for the land, grazing just feels like the right thing."

The Patterson farm, founded by Jake's great grandfather, is well known as the site of the Great Corn Maze, a 24-acre maze with family activities. The maze design has changed annually for the past 20 years, and hosts thousands of visitors each year. In the past, the



Patterson family have operated an active dairy, along with a growing a variety of crops, and in recent years raising heifer replacements and hay sales have diversified the farm's business activities.

Jake worked with Jenn Colby of UVM Extension's Pasture Program to develop a grazing plan based on the animal numbers outlined in his business plan. This technical assistance was funded under the Long Island Sound Watershed Resource Conservation Partnership Program (LISW-RCPP) project, which encourages partnership development to protect natural resources and aid in farm success. The farm lies between Houghton Brook and Burroughs Brook, which are tributaries of the Passumpsic River. After learning from Jake about a desire to seed down all of the existing tilled acreage (with the exception of the Maze, of course!), Jenn connected Jake with Nick Commerci of VT Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS). Nick was able to help Jake with an application for assistance through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), which would help pay for seeding down the tilled acres

as a forage and biomass conservation practice.

"Jake's knowledge, planning and farm background all play well into having another generation continue the history of farming on this family

farm and allow the land to remain in agriculture during a time when nearby local dairy farms are seriously considering going out of business," says Commerci.

In 2018, the first 38 acres were planted into grazing forage species, such as orchard grass and clover, with a nurse crop of oats. The Pattersons harvested and baled the oats, which were used to feed the cattle through the winter. In 2019, the remaining acreage has been seeded down as well.

As Nick says, "Jake has moved the needle in a positive direction by understanding the value of a grass-based grazing operation on land that is more suited to growing hay and pasture rather than an annually tilled crop. Focusing on beef cattle and a rotational grazing plan will provide the manure and animal inputs helpful to restoring and improving the stand quality of his pastures."

Jake has been able to rotationally graze the cows and calves on the 2018 seeding and remarked about some of the other benefits this seeding has provided. He explained how much more rainfall the forage-covered areas have been able to absorb, even with

the extremely wet spring in 2019. Typically, the farm road is muddy and challenging to navigate during the wet parts of the year and was much more passable this spring.

As Jenn says, "We're so humbled and pleased to see a young farmer get established in such a supported way; it's what the Long Island Sound RCPP is all about—protecting water quality, growing healthy soils, and making a difference on farms while working together."

EQIP is a USDA Conservation Farm Bill pro-

gram, funded and administered in Vermont through the Natural Resources Conservation Service of Vermont (NRCS-VT). NRCS helps farmers and ranchers with financial and technical assistance to voluntarily put conservation on the ground. To find your local NRCS Service Center, visit www.nrcs.usda.gov. To learn more about the Long Island Sound Watershed RCPP, visit <https://www.uvm.edu/extension/sustainableagriculture/connecticut-river-watershed-assistance-helping-water-quality>.

For More Vermont Agricultural Community Events Visit:

- The VT Agency of Agriculture Events Calendar: <http://agriculture.vermont.gov/events/month>
- UVM Extension Events Calendars: http://www.uvm.edu/extension/extension_event_calendars
- Vermont Farm to Plate Events Calendar: <http://www.vtfarmtoplate.com/events>
- Northeast Organic Farming Association of VT Events Calendar: <http://nofavt.org/events>
- DigIn Vermont Events Calendar: <https://www.diginvt.com/events/>
- Required Agricultural Resources (RAPs) Resources: <http://agriculture.vermont.gov/water-quality/regulations/rap>
- Agency of Ag's Tile Drain Report now available here: <http://agriculture.vermont.gov/tile-drainage>
- VAAFM annual report now available here: http://agriculture.vermont.gov/about_us/budgets_reports
- Farm First: Confidential help with personal or work-related issues. More info call: 1-877-493-6216 any-time day or night, or visit: www.farmfirst.org
- VermontAgrAbility: Free service promoting success in agriculture for people with disabilities and their families. More info call 1-800-639-1522, email: info@vcil.org or visit: www.vcil.org.

For more agricultural events visit our Funding Opportunities & Resources for Businesses webpage at: http://agriculture.vermont.gov/producer_partner_resources/funding_opportunities

Vermont Housing & Conservation Board's Farm & Forest Viability Program Awards over \$410,000

By Vermont Housing & Conservation Board

The Vermont Farm & Forest Viability Program, a program of the Vermont Housing & Conservation Board (VHCB), awarded a total of \$410,944 to 12 Vermont farms through its FY2019 Dairy Improvement Grants. These grants are made available with funding from Commonwealth Dairy, whose Brattleboro plant produces Green Mountain Creamery Greek yogurt from Vermont milk.

Grant recipients across the state were awarded up to \$40,000 for capital improvement projects to improve



2019 Dairy Improvement Grantee Matthew Howrigan of B&T Black Creek Farms accepts his award of \$40,000 to purchase a no-till drill. (Pictured: Sec. of Agriculture Anson Tebbetts, Deputy Sec. of Agriculture Alyson Eastman, Matthew Howrigan, VHCB Executive Director Gus Seelig, and Viability Program Coordinator Katie Michels.)



2019 Grantee Kirk Lanphear of Lanphear Farm accepts his award of \$40,000 for a cow activity monitoring system. (Pictured: Viability Program Director Ela Chapin, Sec. of Agriculture Anson Tebbetts, Deputy Sec. of Agriculture Alyson Eastman, Kirk Lanphear, VHCB Executive Director Gus Seelig, and Viability Program Coordinator Katie Michels.)

cow health, farm efficiency, milk quality and production, and water quality. These

grants leveraged \$699,894 in additional investments, farm contributions, and grant funding from the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets.

Agriculture Secretary Anson Tebbetts said, "These grants through the Vermont Farm & Forest Viability Program are supporting family farmers in making critical investments in the future viability of their businesses. This investment in infrastructure and innovative technology, along with business advising provided by the Viability Program, results in improvements in efficiency, milk quality, animal welfare, and environmental stewardship that may not have been possible otherwise in the current market."

Kiersten Bourgeois, Business Development &

Communications Manager at Dairy Farmers of America, said, "The Dairy Improvement Grant program has been instrumental in providing needed funding to dairy farmers across Vermont. The commitment that Commonwealth Dairy made has positively impacted many farm families and benefitted the dairy industry in Vermont."

Clifford Farm is an eighth-generation dairy farm in Starksboro with a 235-cow herd, owned and operated by Eric and Jane Clifford. In 2017, they received a \$25,000 Dairy Improvement Grant to purchase a no-till grain drill with a small seed box. Eric says the farm prides itself on "cow comfort, milk quality and sustainable cropping." "We need programs like the Dairy Improvement Grant Program to keep up with the industry

and stay viable. Investments in new, innovative equipment would not be possible without this program. We're very grateful that this funding is available."

Recent grantees Kirk & Katrina Lanphear run Lanphear Farm with their family in Hyde Park. Named the 2016 Vermont Dairy Farm of the Year, Lanphear Farm received a \$40,000 Dairy Improvement Grant in 2018 to invest in a cow monitoring system that provides data on health, breeding, and milk production. The Lanphears said the system has helped them meet their goals to ensure "the cows come first," address time-sensitive needs more quickly, and make tracking and maintenance more efficient and less costly for the next generation. Kirk Lanphear

For Immediate Release

The Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets have received an application for a Milk Handlers license from the following entity: Center for An Agricultural Economy of Hardwick, Vermont to transport and buy and sell milk, cheese, cream, cultured products, butter, cheese, powdered/evaporated milk products, and pasteurized ice cream mix within the State of Vermont. If anyone has germane information as to why or why not this company should or should not be licensed those comments are to be sent to:

The Vermont Agency of Agriculture Food and Markets
Dairy Section Office
116 State Street, Montpelier, VT 05620-2901

All written comments must be received by January 15, 2020.

At that time the Agency will make a determination as to whether a hearing will be held. If we determine that a hearing is necessary and you wish to attend please write to the above address attention Dairy Section.

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Farm Determinations, Building Farm Structures, And Weeding Through Municipal Versus State Jurisdiction?

By Kaitlin Hayes, VT Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets

The farms in our state of Vermont come in all shapes and sizes: from large scale dairy operations, to maple syrup production, to small vegetable growers, to the many developing hemp operations. Farming in Vermont has many faces and can look (and smell!) very different from one to the next.

A common question the Agency is presented with, is: "What is a farm?" What size farm operation falls under the Agency's jurisdiction, and what farm sizes fall under municipal jurisdiction? This is a tricky question and is entirely dependent upon the characteristics of the farm operation. Farm operations that meet the thresholds listed below fall under the Agency's regulatory authority and need to comply with the Required Agricultural Practices (RAPs) for the protection of water quality from nonpoint source runoff.

Farms under Agency of Agricultural Jurisdiction:

- \$2,000+ in average annual sales of agricultural products principally produced at that operation, OR
- No less than 4.0 acres used for farming, OR
- Farm operator has filed a 1040(F) income tax statement (in at least one of

the past two years).

Because farms that meet the above criteria are regulated by the Agency and are required to comply with the RAPs, local zoning and bylaws do not apply to these farm operations. This often comes into play in the agricultural community when a farm structure is being built or renovated. Towns can ask that a farm operator obtain a Farm Determination or Farm Structure Determination Letter from the Agency.

Farm structures are structures that are used by a person for farming, including a silo, a building to house livestock or raise horticultural or agronomic plants, or customarily used to carry out the agricultural practices. A farm structure includes a barnyard or waste management system, either of which is created from an assembly of materials, including the supporting fill necessary for structural integrity.

Farm structures must be used entirely for farming activities and cannot be multiuse. Meaning that a structure built with an in-law apartment, or to be used as a garage for personal vehicles, or to be used for on farm weddings, would NOT be considered farm structures. These kinds of structures may still potentially be used as part of an Accessory on Farm Business, but may still be

subject to Act 250 or other applicable regulations.

While farm structures do not require a municipal building fee or permit, farm operators must comply with the following requirements for farm structures pursuant to the RAPs:

- Farm structures must be set back a minimum distance of 50 feet from the top of the bank of adjoining surface waters.
- Prior to construction of farm structures, the farmer must notify the zoning administrator or the town clerk of the town in which the farm structure is proposed, in writing, of the proposed construction activity. The notification must contain a sketch of the proposed structure including the setback distances from adjoining

property lines, road rights-of-way, and adjacent surface water.

- The farm structure must still meet local setbacks. Farm operators can apply for a variance from municipal setbacks through the Agency's variance request process.
- Farm operators must obtain a Flood Hazard Area and River Corridor permit from the Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) prior to constructing any farm structures in Flood Hazard Areas and River Corridors.
- Any new farm structures that disturb one or more acres of land must obtain authorization from ANR prior to construction.

There are many times when towns or farmers may have questions, such

as: What size farm am I? Is this a farm structure? Do I need to comply with the RAPs? How do I go about applying for a variance for a municipal setback? What constitutes an Accessory on Farm Business?

The Agency can issue a Farm Determination or Farm Structure Determination when requested by a town, as well as issue a Farm Structure Setback Variance when deemed appropriate. To inquire about these processes or ask any related questions contact Kaitlin Hayes at (802) 622-4112 or kaitlin.hayes@vermont.gov

To learn more about the RAPs and water quality in Vermont, please visit the Agency's website: <https://agriculture.vermont.gov/water-quality>.





Produce Farm Resources, Training, Technical Assistance, and Funding Opportunities

By Dominique Giroux, VT
Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets

The ground is frozen, and the snow is falling, yet produce farms across New England are already planning and preparing for the growing season to come. The Vermont Produce Program would like to remind fruit and vegetable growers of the resources, training, technical assistance and funding opportunities that are available to help grow food safety and efficiency on farms. Below is a list of suggestions, however, keep in mind there is more available than presented here – you might have to do some digging (but this time on the computer, not in the ground) or contact the Vermont Produce Program and we'll do the digging for you.

Educational Resources

- **The Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets (VAAFM) Produce Program website** has a list of produce safety resources that growers may find useful when navigating aspects of the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) Produce Safety Rule. Resources are broken out into several sections based on Produce Safety Rule requirements and includes information related to: Agricultural Water and Water Testing; Health and Hygiene; Soil Amendments; Domesticated and Wild

Animals; and Equipment, Tools, Buildings, and Sanitation. Learn more: agriculture.vermont.gov/produce-safety-resources

- **The University of Vermont Produce Safety Portal** is a web portal that provides produce safety resources tailored to the northeast region and community. The Portal, which launched in May 2019, contains factsheets, case studies, photos, standard operating procedures, and much more, all contributed by people in Vermont's produce farming community and beyond. Visit www.uvm.edu/extension/produceportal to create a free user account, save searches, and easily contribute content.
- **The UVM Extension Ag Engineering Blog** contains research, factsheets, and case studies that pertain to Vermont's food and agricultural systems. Specific areas of focus include, but are not limited to; energy efficiency, enhanced refrigeration, and post-harvest design. Explore the blog: go.uvm.edu/ageng
- **The Produce Safety Alliance (PSA) General Resource Listing** also contains useful resources and tools that relate to the FSMA Produce Safety Rule. For example, many growers have expressed interest in learning more about post-harvest sanitization – the PSA website

includes a resource that provides a great introduction to selecting an EPA-labeled sanitizer and has a coinciding Excel tool to help produce farms select an appropriate sanitizer for use on fruit and vegetable crops and food contact surfaces. Learn more: producesafetyalliance.cornell.edu/resources/general-resource-listing

- **The Vermont Vegetable and Berry Growers Association (VVBGA) website** contains many resources pertaining to food safety, crop production and energy on the farm, to name a few. The VVBGA consists of large- and small-scale growers, industry representatives, UVM Extension specialists and VAAFM personnel. Learn more: <https://bit.ly/2XJ1xhk> (URL is case sensitive)



Food Safety Training

- **Produce Safety Alliance (PSA) Grower Training Course:** This training provides information about the FSMA Produce Safety Rule requirements, Good Agricultural Practices, and co-management of natural resources and food safety. PSA Grower Training Courses held in Vermont are co-hosted by VAAFM and UVM Extension. To receive updates and information about upcoming courses Vermont, enroll in the Vermont Produce Portal at agriculture.vermont.gov/produce_portal. You can also browse for additional training opportunities on the PSA website here: producesafetyalliance.cornell.edu/training/grower-training-courses

Technical Assistance

- **On-Farm Readiness Reviews (OFRRs):** An OFRR is a free, educational, non-regulatory assessment of a farm's produce safety practices. This is an opportunity for farms to have a conversation and farm walk-around with Produce Safety Rule experts to evaluate pre-harvest, harvest, and post-harvest conditions and practices, assess what farms are doing well, and identify areas for improvement. OFRRs are conducted jointly by VAAFM and the UVM Extension Produce Safety Team. Learn more: agriculture.vermont.gov/produceprogram/OFRR

- **The UVM Extension Produce Safety Team** offers Vermont produce growers' educational workshops, trainings, and one-on-one on-farm assistance with planning, construction, and renovation of infrastructure and equipment that align with Produce Safety Rule standards. The team can be reached at producesafety@uvm.edu.

Funding Opportunities: Grants, Loans & Financial Assistance

- **2019-2020 Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets Funding Opportunities** can be found here: agriculture.vermont.gov/grants
- **VAAFM's website** also contains a list of partners and resources to assist with business planning and provides additional resources to help farms make important business management decisions. Learn more: agriculture.vermont.gov/businessdevelopment/planning

The Vermont Produce Program supports produce farms of all sizes and stages of development to meet food safety requirements, access markets, and promote public health as sustainable agricultural businesses. The Vermont Produce Program is available to answer any questions about food safety, the FSMA Produce Safety Rule and program services. Contact AGR.FSMA@vermont.gov or (802) 522-3132.



Small Farm Business Viability:

A Survey of Vermont's Certified Small Farms

(This article is the first of a series, so you can look for more information next month!)

By Mark Cannella,
UVM Extension

In spring 2019 UVM Extension Agricultural Business conducted a survey to Certified Small Farms (CSFO) in Vermont. The project goals are to gather information on the economic situation across Vermont's small farms, explore the adaptation to water quality regulations and understand the next steps for farms moving forward. The anonymous survey was distributed to 334 CSFO businesses owners through postal mail and the survey was completed by 173 respondents. Thank you to those who completed the survey.

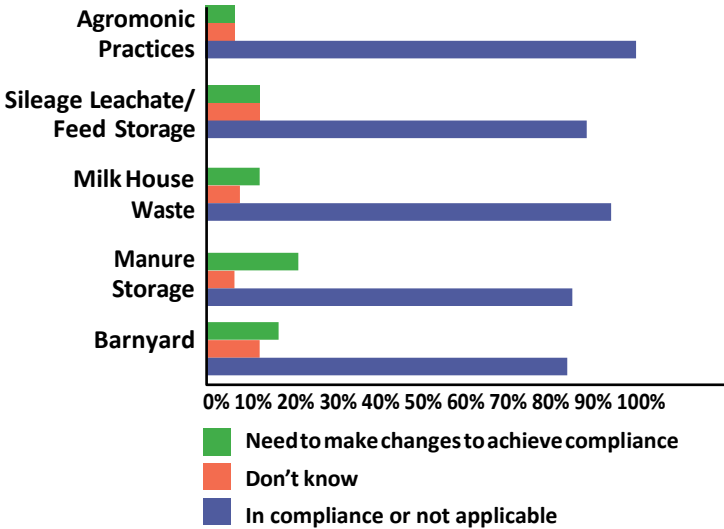
Survey results show a

farming community that is in the midst of major transition. Farms are considering three different scenarios simultaneously. The first scenario requires a determination of what changes can and need to happen to remain in compliance with water quality regulations. The second scenario is looking at alternative enterprises needed to improve farm profitability. The third scenario is the preparation for farm ownership transfer or business exit. Most small farms, whether profitable or not, have aging owners and many of these owners are not in a position to maintain their current role much longer. The majority of respondents to this survey (86%) are primarily dairy farms. The remaining 14% of respondents were split evenly between beef, produce, field

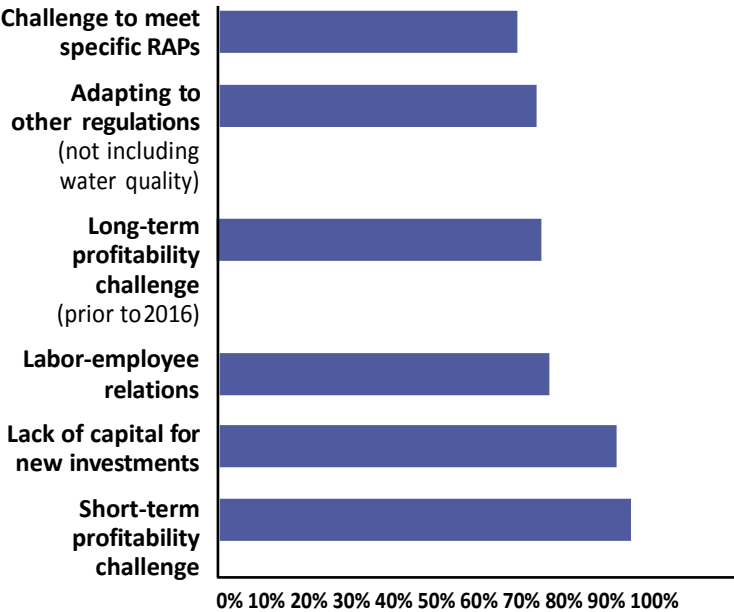
crop or mixed operations. Approximately 75% of the farms completing this survey have already had a visit from a regulatory or conservation agency representative to assess the farm situation. Small farms owners are rapidly adopting new practices and making investments in response to the Required Agricultural Practices (RAPs). The three most common new practices implemented due to RAPs is Buffers or Grassed Waterways (62%), Changes to Manure Handling and Spreading Practices (46%) and Cover Crops/Reduced Tillage (43%). New investments are also needed to improve farm infrastructure. The most common investments made in response to RAPs were Fencing, Water, and Land Improvements (51%), Manure Storage (41%), and Barnyard Improvements (39%).

Figure 1 demonstrates farm owners self-reported compliance status for farm issues in Spring 2019. Expected compliance rates range from a low of 74% for Barnyards to a high of 88% for Agronomic Practices. Not all the respondents know if they are in compliance for all the aspects of their farm. Barnyards and Silage Leachate/Feed Storage were the most common areas where owners did not know if they met compliance standards (11% of owners for both). Manure storage and barnyards were cited as the areas that required more changes for the greatest number of farms.

Self-Reported Compliance Status



Significant Challenges to Farm Viability



Farms have made significant changes in response to RAPs and water quality regulations but their owners overall outlook for farm viability remains much less clear. Most farms cite Short Term Profitability as the most significant challenge to farm viability (83%). The next two most significant challenges were Lack of Capital for Investments (80%) and (Labor /Employee Concerns (66%). Water Quality regula-

tions are cited as a challenge by over half of respondents but the emphasis on other issues highlight economical issues facing small farms. UVM Extension will continue to publish more results from this survey this winter. UVM Extension offers targeted business programs for farms making water quality improvements. For more information, contact Tony Kitsos by email, anthony.kitsos@uvm.edu

Reminder: Annual CSFO Certifications Due January 31, 2020

Certified Small Farm Operations (CSFOs) are required to certify annually and the deadline for 2020 is January 31, 2020. Any farm that has 50 acres or more of annual crops, houses 50 or more mature dairy cows, or 75 cattle, heifers, veal calves, cow/calf pairs, or youngstock, or 40 horses, or a combination of animals with a total live weight that equals more than 90,000 pounds is now considered a CSFO. Newly qualifying operations can certify online or request a paper copy to fill out via fax or the US postal service. If you filled out a CSFO form in the past three years, you will receive a request via your preferred method of communication, mail or email, to complete the Certification Form for 2020. Visit www.agriculture.vermont.gov/csfo or call the Agency at (802) 828-2431 for forms and more information on CSFO certification.

VERMONT VEGETABLE AND BERRY NEWS



Compiled by Vern Grubinger,
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[http://www.uvm.edu/
vtvegandberry/](http://www.uvm.edu/vtvegandberry/)

Reports From The Field

(Burlington) We've never picked sweet peppers into November before, and rarely have we hit single digits so early in November. I guess that is climate volatility for you: no killing frost and then plummeting temps. We are doing our best to ease the transition for our winter tunnel crops by keeping them as cool as we can, but I suspect we'll see more winter injury from poor hardening-off. Time will tell.

Overall production was good with many crops. This year we dedicated one small field with easy irrigation access and lower weed pressure to our baby salad greens, in perpetuity. Though we are foregoing a longer crop rotation, the irrigation and weeding advantages led to significant overall improvements in production this year, and I am excited about the potential to improve even more. We tightened up plant spacing in our tomato houses to 1 double-leader plant every 18" in row instead of 24". While this appears to have been generally favorable, we did

see quite a bit more Botrytis damage in the plants, which could have been related, but also could be explained by other factors.

We added more wheels and movable surfaces to our wash/pack operation, and more containers to our harvest logistics. It is really clear that we can do a better job if we fill containers less full and use more of them. Everyone has more energy and fewer injuries; this has been a really good move for us in the past couple of years.

(Guildhall) Sparrow Arc Farm. We finished our first potato harvest, since coming to Vermont in April of this year, on November 5, just ahead of the freeze up. Having started October 9, it was a long harvest to do our 45 acres of spuds, but we had an unusually high number of breakdowns and definitely let some good digging days go by. Quality and yields were generally excellent.

The only quality issue that came up was some hollow heart, but only in our Russet Burbanks. All the other varieties had no issues, even in the "Chefs". Yields ranged widely from 10,000# to the acre on Red Norlands to 38,000 lbs. to the acre on Bel Monda Golds. Our biggest variety by acreage Norwis did well, with a higher percentage of "Chefs" than I've ever grown in Maine or Upstate NY. So far, potato sales have been good.

We also grew 5.5 acres of Winter squash and 1 acre of Jack O'Lanterns, all of which did well. Winter squash yielded 18,500 lbs. to the acre, far more than expected. Dry conditions in September have led to good storing in the squash, despite

our less than ideal storage. Squash sales have been slow. Butternut prices in particular too low for my taste. We were offered 18-20 cents a lb. by brokers and decided to sit on it instead.

(Orwell) Winter rushed in quickly this year, but hasn't hindered us too much. We are in the midst of installing a solar array and were still able to get most of the site work done despite the snow, even though it sure looked messy. We are excited to produce our own power.

Winter greens sales are decent, with a big push for the Thanksgiving holiday. We have been surprised that the Salanova survived some pretty cold temperatures; it still looks great and produces so much volume. Still trying to figure out the markets for greens--we have been selling pre-bagged greens, which is definitely a better profit for us, but at some stores move them very slowly. Bulk sells more volume but it's hard to get the price we think we need. In any case, we are glad to work with buyers who communicate well and want us to succeed.

In this season of giving thanks, we have so much gratitude to be farming in a beautiful place, amongst a community of wonderful farmers and friends.

(Grand Isle) We are winding down with the last sales of potatoes and winter squash, as well as planning for the next essential winter projects. We are getting straw mulch in place on garlic and strawberries and hoping the peach trees weather the winter cold.

For any farm that fixes or fabricates equipment, we wish to extoll the virtues

of a Plasmacutter machine. It is superior to a torch for working with metal in some instances. It has been a lifesaver for us. Rather than using oxygen and acetylene (both expensive), it uses electricity and compressed air. It is a versatile machine for farm repairs. It makes a nice clean cut with metal; thick or thin. We got our machine from a local (New Hampshire) company, Hypertherm. We are looking forward to the conference in December in Manchester.

(Westminster) We've had one of the best years ever. I'd like to quit farming right now because it will never be this good again, ever. We got the right amount of rain early to get crops started and a long, dry summer with few diseases or insects. We were also better able to manage weeds.

We have a substantial amount of product in storage - about 700 bins of carrots, parsnips, beets, celeriac, turnips and cabbage. A lot of purple daikon, too - anybody want some?

Our markets were relatively strong, and we will be selling some retail through our Winter Market, once Harlow Farmstand closes for the season. I really appreciate our workers, especially our Jamaican colleagues; they're indispensable and allow us to hire a considerable number of local people.

(Westminster West) Each time I think the season is over, I realize there's still more to do. Covered the strawberries today with two layers of mid-weight remay, all plants on raised beds with black plastic and ground cover between the beds. Should be a low labor

field with little weeding next spring. Garlic is covered and waiting for snow.

Last deliveries for Thanksgiving done today, sold out almost everything, just as planned. Started potting up lavender cuttings for spring sales, though I feel ambivalent about doing it all over again next year. I guess it's normal to think about the future this time of year.

Sold a big load of dried hemp buds to a broker yesterday and though the price was lower than I hoped, he bought enough so we were happy. Much more in storage to trim and weigh for sale next month. It's been interesting to see the hemp season progress and learn how much labor goes into a successful crop. Started going to winter farmers' market in Brattleboro, and doing well!

Felt especially good handing all our crew a nice bonus just before Thanksgiving. Hope to see many friends at winter meetings, especially the NEVFC in Manchester NH next month!

Updates From UVM Extension Ag Engineering

GREENS SPINNERS - Three new guides related to washing machine green spinner conversions are available on the blog: <http://go.uvm.edu/ageng>

1. **Shopping Tips:** <http://go.uvm.edu/shoppingtips> is a guide that provides general shopping advice when purchasing a washing machine for conversion to a greens spinner.
2. **Conversion SOP for a Speed Queen TC5000WN** see: <http://go.uvm.edu/tc5pdf>

continued on page 12

CLASSIFIEDS

Cattle

4 year old black angus proven bull for sale . Good bloodlines . Excellent temperament . 2500\$ delivered price . Call 802-558-8196 or 802-265-3078 for more info .

12 – 2 month old Holstein heifer calves . \$200 each or make an offer on all . We milk 200 cows and have too many . 802-375-5795

Equipment

Hay elevator - 15 ft, by Snowco, GE motor S-line; 11(eleven) Utility Gates by Tractor Supply (50" high - 4at 8 ft, 5 at 4 ft, 1 -6 ft, 1- 10 ft) . One 16 gal heated tub, a 4 .5 gal Fortex bucket, and various stock tanks . Call 802-694-1602 or emailbonnehenfarm@gmail .com .

2 Gehl forage boxes 970 and 980 on heavy running gear, 2 manure spreaders: NI 3932 and Kuhn tandem, Uebler 810 feed cart .I can be reached at 802-230-8525 .

International 843 4 row narrow combine cornhead; 3250 Reel Auggie Mixer on gas 1995 Ford 450; Used Agway water bowls . Call for prices 802-770-0959 .

2x4's – 12ft long \$3 . 2x6's – 12 ft long \$3 .50 . 15 ton grain bin- like new . International 550 manure spreader-like new . 256 new Hallond rake . 7 to 8 ton grain bins – great shape . 802-895-4683 or 802-624-0143

90 fast Lajoie Hay elevator, like new . New Holland 256 Hay rake . John Deere KBA Harrow 10ft . 18 ton grain bin . 12-13 ton grain bin . 9-10 ton grain bin . 802-895-4683

Free old tires, good for farm use only . Call 603-256-8422

John Deere 4420 4wd combine, 2800 hours, two heads in good shape . \$15,000 ph (802) 442-5353 .

3 pt hitch wood splitter, Farming wench, Emphyre Pro Outdoor Wood Furnace, two 550 gal fuel tanks and two 275 gal fuel tanks . 802-746-8979 .

1949 Farmall H good paint & tires, runs well 802-592-3356

Sled used for gathering sap . Made by Ben Thresher in Barnet . 802-592-3356 .

New Holland 900 Forage Harvester . Excellent condition/field ready . Tandem axles . All tires new or like new . Has been very well maintained and always stored indoors . Metal Alert III, electrical control box . Price \$12,000 . Westfield, VT, Orleans County . 802-355-3496 . jcouture@maplesyrupvt.net .

1 new 12-4-28 tire . Also, Farmall H good condition – paint & tires . 802-592-3356

Reel Auggie 3250 mixer with scales on F-450 truck; IH 843 4 row narrow corn head; IH 7ft window head off 881 Harvester . Rutland, 802-770-0959 .

375 gal full tank \$100 . CMT bale wrapper \$250 . 2 bottom plow \$75 . 802-426-3339

2500 wimco PYO generator 16ft hay elevator . 13-6-28 tractor chain like new . 90ft Lavoie hay elevator like new . 9 ton grain bin like new . 11-12 ton grain bin . 3 ton grain bin like new . Ford 501 mower good shape . 802-624-0143

3000 gallon mueller bulk tank with 2-5 horsepower compressor . 802-487-4467

General

High Tunnel Greenhouse Assembly & Maintenance: Ledgewood, Harnois, Rimol and more .

Complete assembly, end wall construction, poly installation, renovation, and repairs . Experienced and professional . Plan ahead! Get in touch now to get on the 2020 schedule . Contact Mike Feiner at feinervt@gmail .com, www.vineripe.net, (802) 498-8031 .

Hay, Feed & Forage

Quality Canadian hay for sale, big/small squares wrapped, or unwrapped, round bales wrapped or unwrapped, 1st, 2nd, 3rd cuts available . Switch grass and straw

available, call Richard at 802-323-3275

Square baled hay – top quality, vof certified organic, generous sized . 1st cut \$4.50/bale, 2nd cut \$5.50/bale at the barn in Barnet . 802-592-3088

2019 1st cut Timothy and clover hay \$ 5 .00 a bale plus delivery fee . Call 603-256-8422

Addison County

Large squares available in Addison, Vt . Hay is stored under cover . Looks like a long winter ahead of us . Call now and make sure you have enough . Contact S . L . Moore at 802-463-3875 .

1st cut 4x5 round bales never wet . Good horse & cow hay . 802-948-2627 or 802-558-0166

Certified organic, small square bales always stacked and stored under cover, 35-40lbs/bale . \$4/bale, discounts available for large quantities . Call 802-989-0781 for inquiries

Hay for Sale in Addison, VT . Large square bales and small squares . \$50-60 for Large, \$3.50-4.50 for Small . Delivery Available . Call Jack 802-989-8968

Hay for sale . \$3.25 bale . 802-377-5455

73 1st cut 5ft diameter round bales . \$30-\$35 . Orwell 802-948-2211

Straw for sale - \$7/bale for



50 or more . \$8/bale for less than 50, \$6/bale for all in the barn, approx . 350 . from our winter rye harvest in August . certified organic . Thornhill Farm, Greensboro Bend, 05842, todd@thornhillfarmvermont .com, 802 .441 .3176

bennington County

High quality corn silage and haylage . Large quantities available . 150 wrapped round bales – 2nd, 3rd, 4th cut . 802-394-2494 .

Corn Silage 1000 ton plus . Haylage 500 ton plus . Round bales 4x4 . Square bales small . 802-394-2976

CAledonia County

Square baled hay- Top quality, VOF certified organic, generous sized . 1st cut \$4.50/bale, 2nd cut \$5.50/bale at the barn in Barnet . 802-592-3088

ChiTTenden County

Round bales for horses . Clean first cut timothy mixed grass, quality net wrapped 4' X 5' bales . Never wet . \$45 . each .

802- 879-0391 Westford .

15 large 5x5 round bales mixed grass w/some timothy + clover 800+lbs \$50 ea . call 899-4126 or e-mail

Franklin County

Good Quality Hay 1c & 2c from western US & Canada . Alfalfa orchard & orchard sweet grass 18 to 20% plus protein large bales & organic by trailer loads . Large or small square bales of straw whole or processed at farm we load on direct delivery by trailer load . Mountain View Dairy Farm 802-849-6266

Good quality hay 1c & 2c from western Us & Canada . Alfalfa orchard and orchard sweet grass, 18 to 20% plus protein large bales and organic by trailer loads . 802-849-6266

Large or small square bales of straw whole or processed at farm we load or direct delivery by trailer load . 802-849-6266

LAmoille County

Organic baled straw . \$5 .50/bale . Certified Organic . Valley

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Maryellen.franklin@uvm.edu
P: 802-254-2228

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Dream Farm, Cambridge, VT . 802-644-6598 . email: valleydream@myfairpoint.net .

Orange County

2019 first cut square hay bales for sale . \$4 .00 per bale . Delivery available . Bonnie Kennedy, Chelsea, VT . 802-685-2292 .

Approximately 375 tons of high quality grass and clover first and second cut, cut extremely early in 2018 . First finished May 22, second finished July 2nd. Tests high in energy and protein . 45% harvested "hay in a day" . \$50 per ton. Chris 802-522-9485

Orleans County

Pure alfalfa for sale and also 1st, 2nd and 3rd cut big/small squares, round bales, wrapped

or unwrapped, straw and switch grass . Call Richard at 802-323-3275 .

Organic Certified Silage for Sale: We will deliver from our farm or you can come and pick up .

Call for prices and delivery charge . 1-802-744-2444 or 802-274-4934 or 802-744-6553 .

2nd & 3rd cut haylage and corn silage for sale . Call Peter Gebbie 802-533-2984, leave a message .

Rutland County

First cut 4x5 round bales. 802-265-4566

Good quality 1st and 2nd round bales available, wrapped and dried please call 802-446-2435 .

Washington County

200 - 4x4 round wrapped bales 1st \$45 . 802-229-987 .1

Windham County

2017 4x4 wrapped baleage 1st & 2nd cutting certified organic good quality \$40 per bale 802-254-6982 .

1st cut hay \$3 .60 a bale . 2nd cut hay \$4 .60 a bale . All from fert fields . Guilford . 802-254-5069 .

Hay for sale 4x4 wrapped dairy quality@ \$45 1st cut square bales never wet good horse hay at \$5 . 802-387-4412 . Livewaterfarm@comcast.net

1st cut 4x5 round bales . Don Pettis 802-265-4566

2018 4X4 wrapped baleage . June cut. Certified organic, never wet. \$40.00 per bale,

quantity discount . 802-254-6982 .

Windsor County

HAY FOR SALE-100 Square Bales, Reading, Windsor County VT . \$3 .50 per bale at the barn . Call 802-484-7240

4x5 dry round bales \$45 .00 delivery available . 802-457-1376 .

Rolling Meadows Farm: square bales in the field or barn \$4 .00 . Delivery can be arranged at \$5.50. Very nice hay from fertilized fields in the South Woodstock and Reading area. Call 802-484-5540 or goodfarmvt@gmail.com . Ask for David.

1st. cut dry round bales for sale. Never been rained on, stored under cover. \$50. @ 1st. cut haylage bales for sale. \$45. @

Rt. 5 Weathersfield Bow 802-546-4340 .

Swine

Piglets for sale, born August 5, wormed and ironed. \$65.00 each . Call 603-256-8422

Employment

High-Tunnel/Hoophouse/ Greenhouse Construction - Spring 2020 - Building season runs roughly April - November throughout Vermont and across New England. Candidate is ideally located in the Central VT/ Mad River Valley/Northfield/ Roxbury/Randolph/ Montpelier area. Dependable, punctual, flexible, detail oriented, hardworking skilled workers only . Good pay for the right person. Go to www.vineripe.net/employment for more information .

Vegetable & Berry News

continued from page 10

3. Conversion SOP for a Whirlpool WTW500DW

see: <http://go.uvm.edu/wtw5pdf>

There is also an earlier general guide to greens spinners that includes a wider range of options including everything from manually cranked options to super fancy purpose-built machines: <http://go.uvm.edu/greensspinners>

We have had two great washing machine green spinner conversion workshops . If you are interested in a future workshop like this, send us a note at ageng@uvm.edu. We

do plan to publish a general conversion guide for many of the older model washing machines . If you have specific questions, send us an email .

VVBGA Annual Meeting Is on January 27: Hold The Date

A day-long educational program featuring a variety of (mostly farmer) speakers is in the works! The meeting will again be at the Lake Morey Resort in Fairlee, VT, with a lunch featuring local food . There is still room for commercial members to reserve an exhibit table and/

or to advertise in the annual meeting booklet. Dues start at just \$75, which includes an ad in the booklet, see: http://www.uvm.edu/vtveg-andberry/VV&BGA/2020_Commercial_Membership_Fillable.pdf

Breaking Down The Produce Safety Rule: Biological Soil Amendments Of Animal Origin

Dominique Giroux, Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets

Manure and compost can be valuable assets to many farms to keep soils healthy . Farms use a variety of meth-

ods to incorporate these amendments as well as different techniques for storing, applying, and composting . While soil amendments are important for maintaining on-farm fertility, it's important to keep in mind potential produce safety risks when handling and applying

amendments . The Vermont Produce Program has an article detailing FSMA Produce Safety Rule requirements and recommended best practices as they pertain to Biological Soil Amendments of Animal Origin . You can read the article here: agriculture.vermont.gov/bsaa





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Vermont Products Highlighted at Consumer Night's Buy Local Market and Capital Cook-Off

The 9th annual Consumer Night hosted by the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets invites shoppers to peruse Vermont food and agricultural products.

Alissa Matthews, VT Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets

The 9th Annual Consumer Night will take place in conjunction with the Vermont Farm Show at the Champlain Valley Expo on January 29th from 4:00-7:00pm. This free event is open to all, with a focus on delicious food and impressive Vermont products. The evening will kick off with a farmer's market style Buy Local Market, featuring products from 50 farmers and producers. Products include prepared meals, local dairy, meat, fruits and vegetables, maple syrup, honey, condiments, wine, beer, spirits, wool, and handmade crafts and ready-to-eat prepared foods.

The fast-paced, entertain-

Schedule of Events:

4-7 pmBuy Local Market
5:15 – 6:15 pmCapital Cook-Off
6:30 pmRaffle Prizes Announced
6:45 pmCapital Cook-Off Winners Announced

Location: Blue Ribbon Pavilion, Champlain Valley Exposition, 105 Pearl St. Essex Junction, VT 05452
FREE Admission and Parking!

ing Capital Cook-Off has garnered a strong following and for great reason: Vermont State Representatives, State Senators and Agency of Agriculture staff face off in a cooking contest where a secret ingredient presented by Rooted in Vermont is revealed at the last minute which teams must incorporate into their dishes. Judges and attendees have the opportunity to taste the dishes and vote for the 2020 winner.

The evening will culminate in a raffle featuring prizes

from Vermont businesses.

To participate in the market: While the deadline to participate as a vendor has passed, if you are interested in getting put on the waitlist, please contact Faith Raymond at faith.raymond@vermont.gov or (802) 828-2430.

To donate a raffle prize, contact Kristina Sweet at kristina.sweet@vermont.gov or (802) 522-7811.

For all other inquiries, contact Alissa Matthews at alissa.matthews@vermont.gov or (802) 505-1661.



9th Annual Consumer Night:
Celebrate Vermont Agriculture and Local Products

Buy Local Market 4:00-7:00 pm

Sample and shop great Vermont products at the Buy Local Market featuring prepared meals, local dairy, meat, fruits and vegetables, maple syrup, honey, condiments, wine, beer, spirits, wool, and handmade crafts and ready-to-eat prepared foods.

Capital Cook-Off 5:15 – 6:15 pm

Vermont State Representatives, State Senators and Agency of Agriculture staff face off in a fast-paced cooking contest where a secret ingredient presented by Rooted in Vermont is revealed at the last minute which teams must incorporate into their dishes. Judges and attendees have the opportunity to taste the dishes and vote for the 2020 winner.

Raffle Winners Announced 6:30 pm

Make a purchase from any vendor at the Buy Local Market and receive a ticket to be entered into the raffle to win exciting prizes from local businesses!

Capital Cook-Off Winners Announced 6:45 pm

Wednesday, January 29th, 2020 | 4 PM - 7 PM
Champlain Valley Exposition | Blue Ribbon Pavilion
105 Pearl St, Essex Junction, Vermont 05452

Free Admission and Parking!

More Information at: facebook.com/vtagencyofaag/events



Addison County Kids Making a Maple Industry Impact

By Scott Waterman, VT
Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets

A visit to the Hannaford Career Center in Middlebury during #Capitol4aDay highlighted an exciting development for the maple industry. Career center students are set to make an important impact for Vermont maple producers with the development of a new flow meter, including a patent pending! The new meter could help producers easily identify poor sap flow and leaks that have a negative impact on their production.

The students and their instructors were awarded a prestigious \$10,000 InvenTeams grant from the Lemelson-MIT Program at the Massachusetts Institute



From left to right: Acting Commissioner of Labor Mike Harrington, Adin Giard, Ileigh Aube, Eben Clifford, Roza Stewart, and from Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets, Deputy Secretary Alyson Eastman and Secretary Anson Tebbetts

of Technology to continue their work. The grant will help the team refine their invention that allows maple sugar farmers to measure the flow of sap in their lines, locating inefficiencies within the system. The Hannaford team was one of 14 from across the country to receive

awards and will get the opportunity to display their product in Washington this coming June.

The current design of the maple flow meter has a provisional patent. The center plans to apply for a utility patent, so students and instructors are currently



Secretary Anson Tebbetts listens while Ileigh Aube explains more about the team's work on the flow meter project.

unable to reveal much about how their flow meter works.

The next step in the development of the technology will be to create 10 sap flow meters for the University of Vermont's Proctor Maple Research Center to test on site in Jericho. UVM wants the

devices for this upcoming season, so the students are working hard to meet that deadline. The flow meter concept and project has also caught the attention of the maple industry, including Leader Evaporator.

More to come on this great story!

Farm & Forest Viability Program Awards

continued from page 6

explained, "This monitoring system has been an immense help in easing the workload for us now and making it easier for our children to take over management of the farm and be successful going forward."

Since 2012, funding from Commonwealth Dairy has enabled the Viability Program to award nearly \$1.9 million in Dairy Improvement Grants, leveraging an additional \$7.7 million. A full report detailing the impacts of the Dairy Improvement Grants program is available online along

with information about the Viability Program's business advising services, succession planning support, and current round of Water Quality Grants at: www.vhcb.org/viability.

2019 Dairy Improvement Grant Awards:

Thomas Howrigan, B&T Black Creek Farms, LTD, Fairfield
\$40,000 to install a cow identification system

Peter Smith, Chimney Point Farm LP, Addison
\$40,000 to purchase a multi-crop no-till seeder equipped with GPS

Hilda & Steve Haines, Fisk-Haines Farm LLC, Danby
\$40,000 to purchase a silage bagger and decommission a haylage bunk

Harold Howrigan, HJ & A Howrigan and Sons, Inc., Sheldon
\$31,810 to purchase a no-till drill

Jacques & Roberta Royer, J&R Family Farm, LLC, North Troy
\$40,000 to help build a new heifer barn

Kirk & Katrina Lanphear, Lanphear Farm, Hyde Park
\$40,000 to purchase a cow activity monitoring system

Mark Magnan, Magnan Bros. Maquam Shore Dairy, St. Albans
\$40,000 to install a computer cow identification system and to purchase automatic take-offs

David Manning, Manning Dairy LLC, St. Albans
\$33,684 for bulk tank upgrades

Rhonda & Myles Goodrich, Molly Brook Farm, Danville
\$40,000 for milk house renovations

Patti & Brian Wilson, Morningside Farm, Shoreham
\$10,000 to build a micro-dairy processing facility

Lorenzo Whitcomb, North Williston Cattle Company, Williston
\$16,450 to purchase a no-till cover crop drill

Sam Bellavance, Sunset Lake Farm LLC #2, Alburgh
\$39,000 to purchase a no-till grain drill

The Vermont Farm & Forest Viability Program provides business planning, technical assistance, and ownership transfer planning to farm, food and forest products businesses. For more information about the Viability Program, please visit www.vhcb.org/viability.



USDA Rural Development - Value Added Producer Grants Now Available

What does this program do?

The Value-Added Producer Grant (VAPG) program helps agricultural producers enter into value-added activities related to the processing and marketing of new products. The goals of this program are to generate new products, create and expand marketing opportunities and increase producer income.

You may receive priority if you are a beginning farmer or rancher, a socially-disadvantaged farmer or rancher, a small or medium-sized farm or ranch structured as a family farm, a farmer or rancher cooperative or are proposing a mid-tier value chain.

Grants are awarded through a national competition. Each fiscal year, applications are requested through a notice published in the Federal Register and through an announcement posted on Grants.gov.

Program Funding:

\$18 million.

Maximum Grant Amount:

Planning Grants \$75,000;
Working Capital Grants: \$250,000.

Matching Funds

Requirements: 50 percent of total project costs.

Who may apply for this program?

Independent producers, agricultural producer groups, farmer- or rancher-cooperatives, and majority-controlled producer-based business ventures, as defined in the pro-

gram regulation, are eligible to apply for this program.

How may funds be used?

Grant and matching funds can be used for planning activities or for working capital expenses related to producing and marketing a value-added agricultural product. Examples of planning activities include conducting feasibility studies and developing business plans for processing and marketing the proposed value-added product. Examples of working capital expenses include:

- Processing costs.
- Marketing and advertising expenses.
- Some inventory and salary expenses.

How do I get started?

- Before you apply:
- Request a Data Universal Number System (DUNS) number if your organization doesn't already have one. It should not take more than a few business days to get your number. However, you should plan on requesting it at least a month before the application deadline because you will need that number for the next pre-application step (see below).
 - Register your organization with the System for Award Management (SAM) if you aren't already registered. The registration is free, but you need to complete several steps. It's a good idea to start the registration process at least

a month before any application deadline. Before you start the registration process, we suggest reading through the HELP materials available on the SAM website. Then, you will need to create an account. After you create your account by setting up a user ID and password, you can register your organization. Remember, you will need your DUNS number to complete your registration. Also, make a note of your CAGE (Commercial and Government Entity) code and expiration date because you will need those for your application.

Additional requirements:

Please read the Federal Register notice for the details on how to apply. Applicants should put together the required information at least a month before the application deadline. The extra time allows collection of other required materials such as letters of commitment or support from other organizations, a work plan and budget, and other information. Copies of required forms are available from your nearest Rural Development Office. See the Forms & Resources tab for optional forms that may assist you in developing your application.

Who can answer questions?

If you have questions, you can contact your nearest Rural Development Office.

Will I need to send any reports if I receive a grant?

Yes, if you receive a grant, you will need to send regular financial and performance reports. Your grant agreement will tell you how often you need to send the reports, what forms you need to use and what information you need to put in the reports.

Where can I get more information?

The Value-Added Producer Grants program regulation contains details about the program's purpose, what you can and can't do with grant money, application requirements, and information about how applications will be selected for funding. Remember that you need to read the Federal Register notice to get all the

details about how to apply, but the program regulation also has useful information that you will need before applying for a grant.

What law governs this program?

The VAPG program is authorized under section 231 of the Agriculture Risk Protection Act of 2000 (Pub. L. 106-224), as amended by section 6203 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (Pub. L. 113-79) (see 7 U.S.C. 1632a).

NOTE: Because citations and other information may be subject to change, please always consult the program instructions listed in the section above titled "What law governs this program?" You may also contact your local office for assistance.

For Immediate Release

The Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets have received an application for a Milk Handlers license from the following entity: 5 Generations, LLC of West Glover, Vermont to process, package, transport, bargain, and buy and sell cheese within the State of Vermont. If anyone has germane information as to why or why not this company should or should not be licensed those comments are to be sent to:

The Vermont Agency of Agriculture Food and Markets
Dairy Section Office
116 State Street, Montpelier, VT 05620-2901

All written comments must be received by January 15, 2020.

At that time the Agency will make a determination as to whether a hearing will be held. If we determine that a hearing is necessary and you wish to attend please write to the above address attention Dairy Section.



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